

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 13980

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RP

SUBJECT: ONE VIEW OF PURGES

1. WELL-PLACED CONTACT CLOSE TO SECRETARY MELCHOR'S OFFICE PROVIDED POLITICAL COUNSELOR OCTOBER 3 EXPLANATION OF PURGES WHICH APPEARS GENERALLY PLAUSIBLE.

2. ACCORDING TO HIS ACCOUNT, THE PRESIDENT FELT IT ESSENTIAL TO TAKE STEPS AGAINST BACKSLIDING THAT WAS AFFECTING IMAGE AND REALITY OF NEW SOCIETY PROGRAM. SEC MELCHOR WAS DIRECTED TO MAKE PROPOSAL IN READINESS FOR CELEBRATION OF THIRD MARTIAL LAW ANNIVERSARY. HE RECOMMENDED THAT 1972 DECLARATION OF MARTIAL LAW PURGES BE REPEATED BY FIRING THOUSANDS OF MINOR EMPLOYEES. IN ORDER TO MAKE PURGES CREDIBLE, HE APPARENTLY RECOMMENDED LATER ON THAT PURGES BE DRESSED UP BY ADDING A FEW SENIOR RANKING MISCREANTS.

3. WHEN WORD GOT AROUND THAT SECRETARY MELCHOR WAS RECOMMENDING FIRING OF SENIOR RANKING OFFICERS, AFFECTED POWER CENTERS, INCLUDING SECRETARY ENRILE, MRS. MARCOS
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AND OTHERS DREW UP THEIR OWN SELF-SERVING LISTS WHICH WERE

PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT FOR INCLUSION IN THE MASTER PURGE LIST. SECRETARY MELCHOR'S OFFICE ATTEMPTED TO MANAGE THE ASSEMBLY OF THE LIST IN AS RATIONAL A MANNER AS POSSIBLE BUT THE END PRODUCT CONSISTED OF CONGLOMERATION OF INDIVIDUALS OF LOW AND HIGH LEVEL AGAINST WHOM LITTLE PREPARATION OF CHARGES HAD BEEN MADE AND FOR WHOM FEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPLACEMENT HAD BEEN MADE. MELCHOR'S OFFICE APPARENTLY DID NOT ALLOW OTHER OFFICES TO SHARE IN MAKING UP THE FINAL LIST SO ONLY HIS OFFICE KNEW THE COMPOSITION OF THE FINAL LIST. ALTHOUGH THE LIST WAS TO GO INTO EFFECT AS OF SEPTEMBER 19, THE INITIAL PLAN HAD NOT BEEN TO NAME THE EVIL DOERS PUBLICLY.

4. FOLLOWING THE (UNEXPLAINED) BROADCASTING OF THE LIST, ALL MAJOR POWER CENTERS OF THE GOVERNMENT WERE UP IN ARMS BECAUSE OF WHAT HAD BEEN DONE TO THEM AND/OR BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY ANTICIPATED WOULD BE DONE TO THEM BY THE PRESIDENT AND PARTICULARLY SECRETARY MELCHOR. "COUNTER ATTACKS" ARE BEING CONTEMPLATED OR ARE UNDERWAY AGAINST THIS THREATENING CENTRALIZATION OF POWER. SECRETARY MELCHOR IS THE PRINCIPAL TARGET. ONE REPORTED RESULT OF THE COUNTER ATTACKS WAS THE PRESIDENT'S REFUSAL TO AGREE TO SECRETARY MELCHOR'S PROPOSAL THAT, DURING ENRILE'S ABSENCE HE BE MADE ACTING SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CONCURRENTLY WITH HIS PRESENT JOB. HOWEVER, THE PRESIDENT ASSUMED POSITION HIMSELF AND, ALLEGEDLY, INSTRUCTED SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ENRILE TO BE BACK IN THE COUNTRY IN 10 DAYS.

5. THE PURGE, NEVERTHELESS, IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE, A MILITARY LIST HAS BEEN PREPARED AND WILL EMERGE SHORTLY. THE MILITARY LIST WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A LIST AFFECTING GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS, GOVERNMENT BANKS, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

6. BECAUSE THE CONCEPTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PURGE HAVE BEEN DAMAGING TO THE GOVERNMENT (FOR EXAMPLE, GENERATING ATTACKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP, DISCREDITING THE EFFICIENT IMAGE THE PURGE WAS TO CREATE, AND SLOWING DOWN MANY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS TO A CRAWL ROUTINE), AN ARGUMENT HAS BEGUN TO BE MADE AND BRUIED ABOUT THAT THE PURGE WAS BROUGHT ABOUT NOT BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF

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CONSIDERED IT ESSENTIAL, BUT BECAUSE THE U.S., IN CONNECTION WITH A BILLION DOLLAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, HAD DEMANDED ASSURANCES THAT INCOMPETENTS AND CROOKS BE PURGED SO THAT ITS ASSISTANCE WOULD NOT BE MISMANAGED. (COMMENT: WE HAVE HEARD SIMILAR CHARGES FROM TWO OTHER GOVERNMENT SOURCES.)

7. COMMENT: MUCH OF THE ACCOUNT OUTLINED IN PARAS. 2-5 FITS IN WITH THE BITS AND PIECES THAT WE ARE COLLECTING

ON THE PURGES AND CORRESPONDS WITH OUR IMPRESSION OF THE EFFECT ON THE GOVERNMENT TO DATE. ALTHOUGH THE POSSIBLE USE OF THE U.S. AS A SCAPEGOAT IS A SOMEWAHT SURPRISING TACTIC IN VIEW OF THE SELF-RELIANCE IMAGE THE PURGE IS INTENDED TO PROMOTE, IT IS NOT INCONCEIVABLE AS A SHORT-TERM DIVERSION BY AT LEAST MELCHOR'S FFICE.

8. GIVEN THE CONFUSION THAT REIGNS NOW AND, PERHAPS, THE FEELING THAT MELCHOR HAS BUNGLED THE PUBLIC RELATONS ASPECT OF THE PURGE, THE PRESIDENT MIGHT REASONABLY BE ATTEMPTING A) TO MAKE HIS PEACE WITH SOME OF THE DISAFFECTED, B) TO RE-ESTABLISH THE BALANCE OF POWERS IN WHICH HE IS MORE CONFORTABLE IN OPERATING. WE CAN VERIFY THIS BETTER AFTER ENRILE RETURNS. IN THIS CONNECTION , THE PRESS BE POINTING THE FINGER AT THE ENRILE BODYGUARD AS THE PERPETRATOR OF AN "ACCIDENTIAL" KILLING. SULLIVAN

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